



WORK-IN-PROGRESS SUBMISSION FORM
AND COPYRIGHT TRANSFER
INDIVIDUAL

Work: _____

Submitting Individual: _____

With this document, I, the undersigned NA member, hereby submit the following input to be used in the above identified Work. The materials submitted herewith were prepared by myself as a member of the fellowship and working as a volunteer within the fellowship structure. I recognize that my contributions will be considered as input to NA World Services relating to the Work and will be used as appropriate. I agree that the Work is a "work made for hire" for Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc., the worldwide service entity of the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous ("NAWS"), or if the Work does not technically qualify as such, then, for valuable sufficient consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I hereby assign to NAWS all worldwide rights of copyright I may hold under any legal and/or equitable theories to the Work.

Please print and sign your full name and date your signature.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Contact Information:

Address: _____

Email address: _____

Telephone number(s): _____

Clean date: _____

YOU CAN HELP MAKE HISTORY

Submit your experience to the Basic Text project



Addicts are a dramatic breed, and we may be overly fond of describing what's happening in our lives and our program as "once-in-a-lifetime" or "never-seen-before." But...if you are reading this, you really do have the chance to participate in making NA history. You can help contribute to the Basic Text.

How can that be? Well, as some of you may know, the last World Service Conference approved a motion to replace some or all of the personal stories in our Basic Text, and we need members of the fellowship to put pen to paper and send us their writing.

The motion also includes adding a new preface to the text and adding a brief introduction to the personal stories section. No changes will be made to Chapters One through Ten or to the existing preface and introduction. You can read more about the news up to now on our website, www.na.org/conference, or in the January 2005 issue of *The NA Way Magazine*.

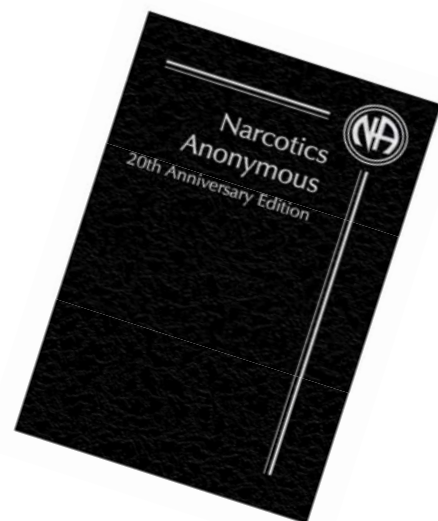
The Basic Text was first published more than twenty years ago, and since that time, we have grown from fewer than 3,000 meetings, mostly in the US, to more than 30,000 in well over 100 countries. Our fellowship today illustrates what we've always known—*anyone* can be an addict, "regardless of . . .," and any addict can find recovery in NA. But how do we put together a collection of experience that paints that picture? We believe two things are key: We need to think creatively, and...

WE NEED YOUR HELP.





This is a groundbreaking project. In fact, we suspect the phrase “personal stories” may not even fully describe what we are trying to capture. The word “personal” makes it sound like these pieces belong to particular people rather than to NA as a whole. The Basic Text is NA literature; it belongs to us all. A member who shares experience in the book, in effect, gives that experience to the fellowship. The word “story” also may not be the right word. When most of us hear “story,” we think of the traditional: how it was, what happened, how it is now. Yes, we are looking for experience that fits this frame, but we also want to branch out and have a broader range of formats, sharing styles, and individual voices (we talk more about this below).



Stay tuned for more on the subject of what to call this part of the Basic Text. If you have ideas, let us know. Send your input to worldboard@na.org.

The experience, strength, and hope our members share in the Basic Text can put a face on our program—for those of us sitting in the rooms today and, more importantly, for the still-suffering addict who may walk through our doors tomorrow. We need your help to update that shared experience so that it better reflects who we are today. We can already hear from the addict around the corner in our home groups; we want to hear from the addicts around the world in our Basic Text.

Important dates

December 2005

Deadline to send in your experience

September 2006–March 2007

Review & input period (the period when the revised text is mailed out to those who sign up to receive it, and members give their input on the draft)

September 2007

Approval draft is published (this is the draft that will be voted on at the World Service Conference)

24 April–4 May 2008

World Service Conference

To gather all of our many voices, we’ll have to try some new things. We know that your responses to this solicitation will be a great start; many of you will send us something after you read this. But not all addicts are skilled at or comfortable with expressing themselves in writing (or in English). And, in some cultures, sending in your own personal experience, in response to a general call, could be seen as pushy or egotistical. In order to collect experience from some communities, we may need to use more active methods; members within those communities may be able to help us. We’ve also talked about using NA events, and even interviews, to collect experience that is more representative of our whole fellowship—the “we” that is a bunch of “I”s.

So how can you help? Send us your experience, spread the word, get others interested and involved, give us your input. We have a lot of new ideas, and we want to know what you think.



Some members find it helpful to work in groups. Here are some things you might want to try. Other workshop ideas will be available upon request.

- ◆ Have a sharing session. Topics could include something like:

When did you first really “get it”—understand the message of NA?

When did someone sharing their experience with you really make a difference for you?

Talk about what during the sharing session grabbed your attention and why. Think about how you can use those techniques in your writing.

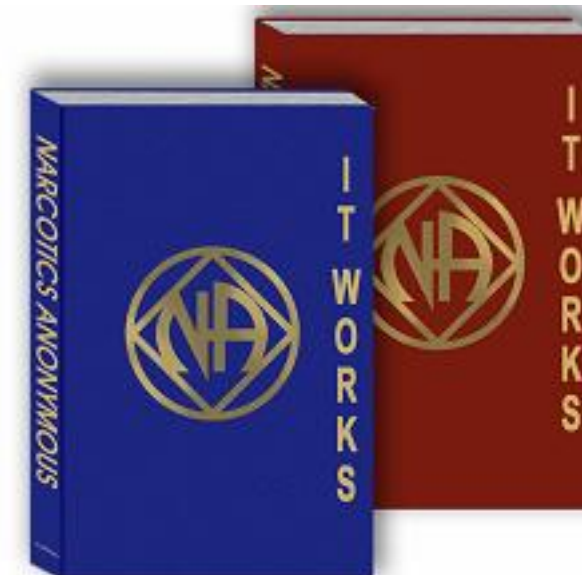
- ◆ You could pair off or help each other get started in a small group. Try interviewing each other to find out what someone else finds most interesting in your personal history. Or share with each other to find the heart of your experience—the things you most want to highlight or focus on.
- ◆ You can take turns writing for each other. One of you can talk and another can take notes.
- ◆ Each of you can write for a while and then you can work together to make your pieces shine.

And remember: “There is no model of the recovering addict.” Be yourself, write as yourself, and share as yourself. Don’t be afraid to color outside the lines!

Keep an eye out for more information on our website:

www.na.org/conference.

Here you will find updates, project news, workshop ideas, etc.



Be Creative!

Often all it takes to turn a good piece of writing into a great one is some revision. The difference between sharing your experience on paper and sharing it in a meeting is that on paper you do get a second chance to say it right. Here are some ideas to help you tell it the best way you can.

- I Try saying what you're saying in different ways. For instance, you could write,
 - ◆ I really wanted to use, or
 - ◆ I was mad as a cut snake and in my head was this voice saying over and over "bottle of gin . . . bottle of gin . . . bottle of gin," or
 - ◆ When I drove past the corner, I was gripping the steering wheel so hard, I left nail marks in the vinyl.

Sometimes it's not what you say, but how you say it that gets the message across.

- II Try playing with the order of your writing: What happens if you start in the middle? What happens if you tell "the end" first? And so on.
- III Put us in your shoes. Don't just tell us how you felt; describe the things that made you feel that way. Paint us a picture. For instance, you could write:
 - ◆ I was grieving, or
 - ◆ All of the colors were gone, and it seemed impossible to get out of my pajamas, go to a meeting, or even make toast.

You could write:

- ◆ I had a hard time identifying, or
- ◆ Everyone in the meeting was my parents' age and they were all talking about mortgages.

- IV Write in the language you use, not in the voice you imagine an "author" should have. You're writing about what you've been through. Make it as important for your reader as it was for you. Make it stand out. Make it live.

You are NA

A new collection of shared experience is an opportunity to reflect more fully the diversity of our fellowship today—who we are, the way we feel, and the way we live. We hope for a book that better showcases the international nature of our fellowship, our wide-ranging demographics, and our breadth of experience in recovery. We know NA can work for anyone—we want a collection of experience that illustrates all of those "anyones" getting clean, staying clean, and living clean.

We are in more than a hundred countries—in cities and towns. Some of us are isolated in rural areas or institutions, while others struggle to shape their own lives and recovery in communities that are very close-knit. Some of us got clean when we were still "kids," others were senior citizens. We are every ethnicity, sexual identity, and demographic imaginable. Help us to put together a collection of writing from our rich fellowship. Tell us about *you* in all of your unique beauty.

And we're not just looking for writing from diverse kinds of members; we're also looking for members to share their diverse experiences. Maybe you struggled to develop a relationship with a Higher Power when you were new, and you want to focus on that. Or maybe you had a breakthrough at nine years clean that you can share about. Perhaps you confronted a long-buried demon at a point in your recovery where you thought "I can't believe I am struggling with this when I have xx years clean." Help the person who will confront those demons and have those breakthroughs after you by writing it down and sending it in.

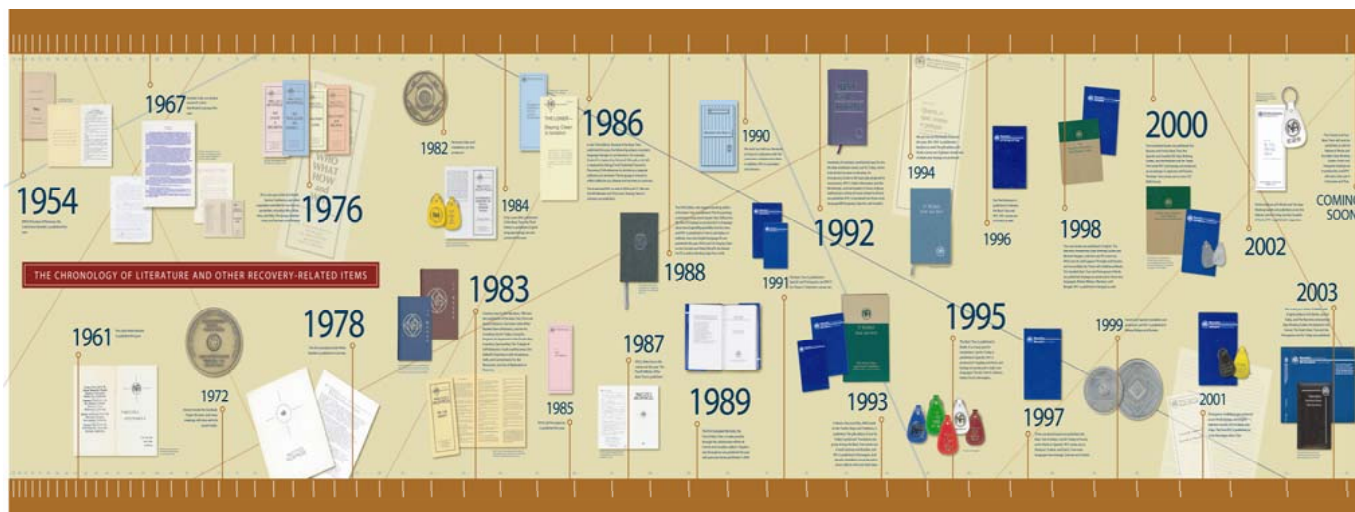
Maybe you are an atheist, a single parent, a celebrity, a veteran. . . . Talk about it!



You don't have to write about everything that's happened to you from birth until now—how could you? Maybe you have something to say about coping with illness in recovery . . . what it's like to start NA in your community . . . going back to school. . . . Perhaps you relapsed for five years and finally "got it." Or perhaps you were able to stay clean the moment you joined NA but you confronted your disease in other ways. Share your experience and tell us what happened and how NA's spiritual principles got you through.

Regardless of our circumstances, we seem to have this in common: all of us felt different in some ways before we found a home in NA. What kind of shared experience would have helped *you* when you walked through the doors of your first meeting? Tell us now. Remember, "diversity" means all of us—from the "margins" to the "mass." Send us your experience! Don't second guess yourself.

Send your experience and ideas to the World Board
19737 Nordhoff Place
Chatsworth, CA 91311 USA
worldboard@na.org



Writers' Tips

We have some important things to share with you before you embark on this journey. Following are some things to keep in mind while you write and some guidelines for submission.

I

We will not accept anonymous submissions. You must be anonymous within the piece you write, but you can't be anonymous with us for legal reasons.



Some Essentials for Submission

II

We request that members' names not be included on the submissions themselves, only on the cover letter and/or copyright release form.

III

Please include a signed copyright release form and your full name, address, and phone number—we may need to talk to you about revisions and work with you.

IV

Also include your clean date. But don't worry—there are no minimum requirements; we are accepting submissions from any clean member of NA.

VII

No submission is too short, but as a rough guideline, aim for a piece of fewer than 2,700 words (seven pages in our current Basic Text).

VI

If you can send us an electronic document in MS Word, that is preferable. If you mail your submission via post, please use black ink on white paper. Thanks!

V

Submissions in any language are welcomed.

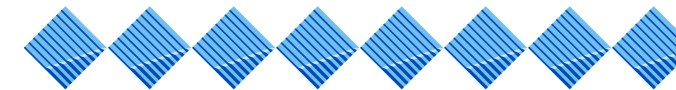
What Happens to Your Piece after It's Submitted?

I

Once you send us your writing, you won't get it back. Be sure to keep a copy for yourself.

II

As we mentioned earlier, the Basic Text is NA literature that belongs to all of us. A member who shares experience in the book, in effect, gives that experience to the fellowship. If your submission is selected to be included in the Basic Text, it will be edited and possibly retitled. We want to be as respectful as possible in that process, to preserve the voice and experience in the piece, but you should be clear: If you send in a piece, it will be subject to editing.



I

We want to hear about your recovery—how do you practice the principles in your life?

II

We are looking for submissions from members across the spectrum of religious and spiritual beliefs, including atheist and agnostic members. But don't forget that NA is a spiritual, not religious, program. Feel free to share about the importance of your beliefs, but try to steer clear of specific religious references or terminology.

III

Of course we will get more material than we use. But don't let that stop you. Your input may give us ideas about kinds of experience that need to be reflected or ways of sharing that experience that may show up in the final draft even if your submission doesn't.

IV

Above all, please don't let these guidelines intimidate you. You don't have to write like a pro. All of the material we use will be edited.

We hope that these editorial guidelines don't just sound like a list of "musts" or "can'ts." It may help to think simply about how we typically write and share and try to put your thoughts down on paper in that spirit.

Some Guidelines for Writing